

# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

REPUBLICANS | RANKING MEMBER MIKE BOST

## **The Veterans' Camera Reporting (VCR) Act**

### **Background:**

Every veteran deserves to be safe at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Centers. Tragically, several recent instances across the country have highlighted serious safety issues that were exacerbated by missing or malfunctioning cameras. For example, at a VAMC in West Palm Beach, Florida, a veteran on a locked mental health unit tragically died by suicide. The cameras on the unit that may have allowed staff to see him preparing to take his life and intervene were not operational at the time of his death. At a VAMC in Clarksburg, West Virginia, another tragedy took place when a nursing assistant administered lethal doses of insulin to at least seven veterans. The lack of camera footage meant her heinous actions went unnoticed for nearly a year.

To prevent further tragedies like those from happening again, this bill would require VA to report to Congress on the use and maintenance of all cameras used for patient safety and law enforcement purposes in VA medical facilities. In the report, VA would be required to make recommendations on how to improve and monitor camera use throughout the VA healthcare system. This would provide an important record of existing policies and practices with respect to camera usage and pave the way for needed improvements to keep veterans, visitors, and VA employees safe.

### **The Message:**

- VA should be a safe place for veterans to seek care.
- Absent or malfunctioning cameras in VA medical centers have contributed to preventable patient safety issues and, in some cases, criminal actions across the country.
- This commonsense legislation would ensure VA has processes in place to ensure appropriate camera usage so that VA can meet the gold-standard for safety.